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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4656

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 000130

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S/CT FOR GAIL ROBERTSON; NEA/ELA FOR MONZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/24/2018
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [EFIN](#) [EIND](#) [EINV](#) [ETTC](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [SY](#)
SUBJECT: CI/KR RESPONSE FOR S/CT

REF: STATE 6461

Classified By: A/DCM Todd Holmstrom for reasons 1.4(b/d)

11. (C) In response to reftel, Post has determined there is no/no critical infrastructure or key resources in Syria that would have an immediate and deleterious effect on the United States if destroyed, disrupted or exploited. Due to the strained bilateral relationship, we do not engage the SARG on its plan to assess and protect critical infrastructure or key resources, if one even exists.

12. (C) Within Syria, the electrical power grid is the most obviously vulnerable infrastructure, as greater Damascus experiences frequent, year-round power outages and peak-season power rationing. Local experts estimate that as much as 35 percent of all Syrian electricity generated is wasted due to antiquated distribution infrastructure and illegal tapping into the grid.

13. (C) Key natural resources in Syria include water, oil and natural gas. Although dry-season water rationing was implemented decades ago, year-round water rationing was introduced in 2006 and public water remains unavailable between the hours of 6:00pm and 8:00am. Syria's petroleum assets are the country's most valuable resource, although oil production has declined from a peak 600,000 bpd in 1996-7 to approximately 360,000 bpd in 2007. Several oil and gas pipelines transit the country, and the Syrian portion of a pipeline designed to bring Egyptian gas to Turkey through Jordan and Syria is under construction. Although Post has not assessed SARG measures to protect petroleum infrastructure, local media recently reported SARG frustration over its inability to prevent smugglers from tapping into the primary diesel pipeline between Homs and Damascus.

CORBIN